

## Message Text

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INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SOV, XB, XE, XD, XC, XF, XG,

SUBJECT: US POSITION ON SOVIET ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY  
PROPOSALS

REF: SEOUL 7318 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING SAIGON'S COLLAPSE, SOVIETS MADE DIPLOMA-  
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TIC SOUNDINGS IN VARIOUS ASIAN NATIONS ABOUT THEIR LONG-

STANDING ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSALS. RECENTLY SOVIETS HAVE INTENSIFIED THEIR EFFORTS SUGGESTING THAT PRINCIPLES AGREED TO IN CSCE SUMMIT AT HELSINKI ARE APPLICABLE TO ASIA'S PROBLEMS AND IN ACCORD WITH THEIR SECURITY PROPOSALS. SOVIETS HAVE ALSO SAID US AND UK SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS SYSTEM AND HAVE AGAIN FLOATED EARLIER IDEA THAT SYSTEM SHOULD INCLUDE MIDDLE EAST. ASIAN NATIONS HAVE SHOWN LITTLE INTEREST IN THESE RECENT INITIATIVES. SECRETARY AT JULY 31 PRESS CONFERENCE AT HELSINKI MADE CLEAR THE US HAS NO INTENTION OF ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH SOVIET INITIATIVES. END SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND. ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSALS WERE FIRST RAISED BY BREZHNEV IN 1969 SINCE THEN THE SOVIETS HAVE MAINTAINED A FLUCTUATING STREAM OF COMMENTARY BUT MOST ASIAN COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN EITHER HOSTILE TO SOVIET

PROPOSAL OR UNINTERESTED. MOST NOTABLE EXCEPTION WAS IRAN, WHICH AGREED TO COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON OCCASION KOSYGIN VISIT IN 1973. IRANIANS, HOWEVER, HAVE SINCE CHOSEN TO AVOID ANY FURTHER INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS ON THIS MATTER. MORE RECENTLY THERE HAS BEEN QUERY FROM ROK ON LATEST US POSITION ON SOVIET PROPOSALS (REFTEL). THE PRIMARY FEATURES OF SOVIET PROPOSITION ARE THAT ASIAN NATIONS SHOULD ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES: THE SOVEREIGN EQUALITY OF ALL STATES, THE NON-USE OF FORCE, ECONOMIC COOPERATION ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY, NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS, SELF-DETERMINATION, AND THE INVIOABILITY OF EXISTING FRONTIERS. THE SOVIETS ALSO EMPHASIZE THAT A SYSTEM BASED ON THESE PRINCIPLES WOULD BE OPEN TO ALL ASIAN STATES. THEY EXPLICITLY SAY CHINA SHOULD PARTICIPATE AND, IMPLICITLY, DO NOT EXCLUDE DIVIDED COUNTRIES SUCH AS SOUTH KOREA IN THAT THEY SAY ALL ASIAN STATES DESERVE SECURITY. THE SOVIETS MADE NEW SOUNDINGS FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF SAIGON AND RECEIVED NO SIGN OF ASIAN INTEREST. FOLLOWING HELSINKI, SOVIETS HAVE PUSHED IDEA THAT THEIR ASIAN SECURITY PROPOSALS ARE COMPLETELY CONSISTENT WITH CSCE PRINCIPLES. ALSO THE SOVIETS BOTH PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY HAVE PUT FORTH THE IDEA THAT THE US AND GREAT BRITAIN SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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SUCH A SYSTEM.

2. SOVIET PURPOSES. THE SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY INTEND TO USE THESE PROPOSALS AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THEIR ASIAN DIPLOMACY. WE CONSIDER THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO BE BASICALLY TACTICAL WITH ALMOST NO CHANCE OF ACCEPTANCE UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS, A FACT THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES ALMOST CERTAINLY REALIZE. THESE PROPOSALS, HOWEVER, DO SERVE

SEVERAL SOVIET PURPOSES IN THAT THEY:

-- SUPPORT THEIR CONTENTION THAT THE USSR  
IS AN ASIAN AS WELL AS A EUROPEAN NATION;

-- ENABLE THE SOVIETS TO ASSERT A ROLE  
WHICH MOST ASIAN NATIONS MIGHT NOT  
BELIEVE JUSTIFIED IN MORE NARROW  
ECONOMIC AND MILITARY TERMS;

-- GIVE THE SOVIETS A DIPLOMATIC MEANS OF  
IMPLICITLY SUPPORTING THEIR ANTI-CHINESE  
POLICIES (EVEN THOUGH THEY SAY THE  
CHINESE SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A  
SYSTEM);

-- CAN BE PORTRAYED AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO  
US SPONSORED SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND

-- GIVE THE SOVIETS A PLATFORM FROM WHICH  
THEY COULD ATTEMPT TO ASSOCIATE THEM-  
SELVES WITH VARIOUS INDIGENOUS SECURITY  
SCHEMES SUCH AS ZONES OF PEACE AND  
NEUTRALITY AND NUCLEAR FREE ZONES.

3. ASIAN RESPONSES. THE ASIAN NATIONS OBVIOUSLY RECOGNI-  
ZE THE ANTI-CHINESE AND OTHER OPPORTUNISTIC ASPECTS OF  
THIS INITIATIVE AND HAVE NO DESIRE TO ANTAGONIZE CHINESE  
BY ASSOCIATING WITH THESE SOVIET-SPONSORED PROPOSALS, NO  
MATTER HOW INNOCUOUS THEY MAY SEEM. FURTHERMORE, WITHIN  
THE LARGER CONTEXT OF ESCALATING SINO-SOVIET POLEMICS,  
THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN INCREASINGLY CRITICAL OF THE  
CHINESE FOR THEIR ATTACKS ON THESE PROPOSALS, AND AS LONG  
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AS THIS CONTINUES ASIAN WARINESS WILL BE EVEN MORE IN-  
TENSE THAN IT OTHERWISE WOULD BE. ONE FACTOR WHICH MAY  
TEMPT SOME ASIANS TO COMPROMISE THEIR HOSTILITY TOWARD  
SOVIET PROPOSALS IS POSSIBILITY OF WINNING BILATERAL  
CONCESSIONS FROM SOVIETS IN EXCHANGE FOR AGREEMENT TO  
COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE SUPPORTING ACS CONCEPT. THIS WAS  
TECHNIQUE USED BY MOSCOW WITH SOME SUCCESS IN EARLY PHASE  
OF PUSHING CSCE PROPOSALS. IRAN APPARENTLY HAD THIS IN  
MIND IN AGREEING TO 1973 COMMUNIQUE. ROK ALSO APPEARS  
TO BE TOYING WITH POSSIBILITY THAT AN EXPRESSION OF ROK  
INTEREST IN ACS MIGHT SOMEHOW BE USED TO ALLEVIATE  
COMMUNIST WORLD'S CAMPAIGN TO ISOLATE ROK OR TO GET SOVIETS  
ON RECORD IN SUPPORT OF A MULTILATERAL SECURITY SYSTEM  
THAT WOULD SERVE AS GUARANTEE TO ROK AGAINST NORTH KOREANS

4. US POSITION. WE EXPECT SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES TO CONTINUE TO PUSH THESE PROPOSALS. AS POSTS AWARE, SECRETARY INDICATED IN JULY 31 HELSINKI PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THE US HAS NO PLANS TO ASSOCIATE ITSELF WITH ANY SOVIET PROPOSALS IN THIS AREA. WHEN QUESTION OF PROPOSALS COMES UP, POSTS MAY COMMENT ON THEIR LACK OF SERIOUS CONTENT AND UNACCEPTABILITY IN MUCH OF ASIA. POSTS MAY ALSO STATE THAT WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT MOST ASIANS BELIEVE THESE SOVIET PROPOSALS HAVE BECOME A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE SOVIETS AND THE CHINESE AND HAVE NO DESIRE TO GET INTO THE MIDDLE OF THIS DISPUTE. ASIAN NATIONS IN GENERAL HAVE SHOWN NO PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THESE PROPOSALS. WE OURSELVES BELIEVE THAT ASIAN COUNTRIES THEMSELVES WILL BE PRIMARY DETERMINANTS OF FORMS OF COOPERATION IN VARIOUS PARTS OF ASIA. POSTS SHOULD PARTICULARLY AVOID BEING DRAN INTO HYPOTHETICAL DISCUSSIONS ABOUT US PARTICIPATION IN THIS SOVIET-SPONSORED SECURITY SYSTEM, SINCE SUCH DISCUSSIONS WOULD CARRY WITH THEM IMPLICATIONS THAT THE USG BELIEVES SUCH A

SYSTEM IS LIKELY TO COME ABOUT OR IS INTERESTED IN SEEING THAT IT DOES. IF PRESSED ON THE SOVIETS' RECENT ATTEMPTS TO DRAW AN ANALOGY BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA, POSTS MAY POINT OUT THAT THERE IS VERY LITTLE IN THE SECURITY SITUATION OF EUROPE ANALOGOUS TO ASIA'S SECURITY PROBLEMS.

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5. FOR SEOUL: IN ADDITION TO DRAWING ON ABOVE, EMBASSY MAY NOTE THAT INTEREST IN SOVIET PROPOSALS APPEARS TO US NOT LIKELY TO BE PRODUCTIVE WAY FOR ROK TO ATTEMPT EXPAND CONTACTS WITH USSR. KISSINGER

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